

Alamo Heights News

CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS

6116 BROADWAY

78209

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June 2007

Water: The Topic Brings Both Good and Bad News

Alamo Heights residents fill their drinking glasses and water their thirsty landscapes with water the city provides from three wells drilled into the Edwards Aquifer. The fact that the water comes from the Edwards Aquifer means that the excellent quality meets the State of Texas standards for public water systems.

The good news continues when the cost is considered, especially for low usage customers. Alamo Heights residents who use between 500 and 1,000 cubic feet per month pay approximately 60-80 percent as much as San Antonio Water System customers. One reason is the lower meter fee in Alamo Heights compared with the SAWS charge.

For customers who use more than 1,000 cubic feet of water per month, the cost in Alamo Heights is about 90 percent of the amount SAWS customers pay. Their savings increase substantially, though, when SAWS institutes summer rates; high usage customers then pay about 70-75 percent of what SAWS customers pay.

All the news about Alamo Heights water isn't good, however. The city has already identified a loss of about 30 percent of the water pumped and replaced meters throughout the city to reduce the loss. More work will be required to identify and repair leaks in the outdated infrastructure.

The other problem is supply. The

Edwards Aquifer Authority allocates annual pumping rights for all water producers in the area. Normally the city has enough water, but during drought periods when restrictions are in force, Alamo Heights risks pumping more than the limit and then either must pay significant fines or quickly lease water rights if it can. The two best solutions to the problem are reducing water losses and conservation.

These topics and more will be discussed in future newsletters so Alamo Heights residents can understand the benefits and challenges for the city's nearly \$1.6 million per year enterprise. Next month: Plugging the holes when water flows.

Proposed City Charter Amendments

The city of Alamo Heights is seeking public comment regarding three proposed city charter amendments.

1. Proposition One – To amend the city charter to eliminate provisions that have become inoperative because they have been superseded by state law; to replace citations to obsolete statutory references; to update terminology to current legal usage; and to eliminate the obsolete transitional provisions that no longer have effect.
2. Proposition Two – To amend the city charter to change to a council-manager form of government.
3. Proposition Three – To amend the city charter to limit the height of buildings to 55 feet inside the corporate city limits.

Three Special City Council Meetings will be held at the City Council Chambers, 6120 Broadway, to receive public comments on the proposed city charter amendments:

Wednesday, June 20 – 1st Public Hearing – 6 p.m.

Thursday, July 19 – 2nd Public Hearing – 6 p.m.

Monday, August 6 – 3rd Public Hearing/Council consideration and action to place charter amendments on Nov. 6 ballot – 6 p.m.

The City Charter with proposed revisions and a related PowerPoint presentation given at the June 7 City Council meeting are available on the city's website www.alamoheightstx.gov/news/.

Calendar

July

2	Planning and Zoning	6:00 p.m.
9	City Council Meeting	5:00 p.m.
11	Board of Adjustment	7:00 p.m.
17	Architectural Review Board	6:00 p.m.
19	Public Hearing for Proposed Charter	6:00 p.m.
23	City Council Meeting	5:00 p.m.

* Note: City Offices will be closed July 4 for Independence Day
Holiday Solid Waste Pickup Schedule will be in effect for the week of July 2nd.

911 for EMERGENCY

Fire/EMS (Non Emergency): 824-1281
Police (Non-Emergency): 822-3321
Police Administration Office: 822-6433
Police Investigations: 822-2164

CITY HALL

Administration: 822-3331
Taxes: 882-1502
Water: 882-1507
Court Clerk: 882-1501
Public Works: 826-0516 (includes permits, garbage & trash, brush, recycling, inspections, etc.)

Mayor & Aldermen

Louis Cooper-MAYOR
882-1511
lcooper@alamoheightstx.gov

Stan McCormick-PLACE 1
882-1512
smccormick@alamoheightstx.gov

Bobby Rosenthal- MAYOR PRO TEM/PLACE 2
882-1513
brosenthal@alamoheightstx.gov

Jill Souter-PLACE 3
882-1514
jsouter@alamoheightstx.gov

Bill Kiel-PLACE 4
882-1515
bkiel@alamoheightstx.gov

Susan Harwell-PLACE 5
882-1516
sharwell@alamoheightstx.gov

City Officials

Rebecca Waldman-CITY MANAGER
882-1500
rwaldman@alamoheightstx.gov

Jim Gray-PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
882-1505
jgray@alamoheightstx.gov

Darren Smith-FIRE CHIEF
832-2205
dsmith@alamoheightstx.gov

Rick Pruitt-POLICE CHIEF
832-2200
rpruitt@alamoheightstx.gov

Cynthia Barr-CITY TREASURER/
TAX -ASSESSOR COLLECTOR
882-1502
cbarr@alamoheightstx.gov

Judie Surratt-CITY SECRETARY/
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER
882-1503
jsurratt@alamoheightstx.gov

Marian Ramirez-ASSISTANT TO CITY
MANAGER/DEPUTY CITY SECRETARY
882-1508
mramirez@alamoheightstx.gov

Jack Guerra - COMMUNITY DEV. MGR.
882-1504
jguerra@alamoheightstx.gov

Website: www.alamoheightstx.gov

CITY BRIEFS

Work Progresses on Proposed FY 2008 Operating Budget

The City Council will hold a public hearing on June 25 to gather comments about the proposed budget for fiscal year 2007-08. Budget adoption is scheduled for July 9.

The proposed budget includes revenue of \$11,057,125, a 4.94 percent increase from the previous year, based on the current tax rate and no increase in fees. Approximately 55 percent of revenue is expected to come from property taxes.

Proposed expenditures will total \$10,451,997, a 5.27 percent increase. The increase will cover capital expenses to upgrade the city's information technology system and expected increases in fuel costs, replacement of aging vehicles and equipment, employee performance pay, public safety certification pay increases and additional EMS and utility staffing.

The City Council conducted four budget work sessions in May and June to review the proposed budget and named council members Jill Souter and Bill Kiel as the Budget Committee to work with staff to incorporate City Council recommendations and finalize the proposed budget. The City Council also heard a PowerPoint presentation on June 4.

The budget document and a PowerPoint presentation are available at City Hall and on the city's website www.alamoheightstx.gov/news/. For more information, call Marian Ramirez, assistant to the city manager, at 882-1508.

2007 International Fire and EMS Stand Down

To sharpen their skills, Alamo Heights Fire/EMS Department personnel will participate in the 2007 International Fire and EMS Safety Stand Down June 17-23.

The stand down will help prepare firefighters and EMS personnel for their daily duties by reviewing their training and the proper use of equipment to ensure safe response and return from all emergencies.

Failure to remain cautious can cause routine activities to become hazardous, as shown by the many fire service and emergency medical service deaths and injuries. Last year in the U.S., 105 firefighters died in the line of duty; already this year, 28 have been lost.

The purpose of the stand down is to reduce the number of deaths and injuries by calling attention to safe practices and improving them. Stand downs have been used by the military for years to correct identified issues.

D.A.R.E Program Graduates Students

Nearly 700 students in the 5th grades at Cambridge, Woodridge and St. Luke's elementary schools and the 7th grade at Alamo Heights Junior School graduated from the D.A.R.E. program during the 2006-07 school year.

The Alamo Heights Police Department offered the program to focus on drugs and drug abuse and to help students become responsible citizens who avoid peer pressure, make good decisions and deal with bullying.

Presented in 9-week sessions for elementary schools and 10-week sessions for the junior high school, students were taught in the classroom by Alamo Heights officers. A program is planned for the upcoming school year.

Refreshing Broadway Planter

The Alamo Heights Girl Scout Troop refreshed plantings in the city's planter at the Stewart Center on June 9. The troop adopted the planter at Barilla and Broadway last year when they planted a variety of flowering plants. They have now replaced those lost during the winter.

Other groups are encouraged to adopt a city green space in Alamo Heights as a project to help beautify the city. For information about volunteer planting opportunities, call the Public Works Department at 826-0516.

Property Tax Reminder

Residents whose 2006 taxes are not scheduled on a quarterly payment plan and remain unpaid by June 30 will incur an additional 20 percent penalty on the outstanding taxes, penalties and interest due.

Watch for Leaks

Water leaks can waste thousands of gallons of the precious commodity. If you observe or suspect a water leak, please call the Public Works Department at 826-0516 or 832-2231. After business hours, call the police dispatcher at 822-3321.

Postal Service Delays

The City has received numerous calls regarding non-receipt of Water Bills. The bills are processed and mailed before the 20th of each month. If you have not received your bill by the 30th please contact us at 822-3331.